Amplifying the Inner Voice of the Poet of Riddle Hymn Rv-1.164 of Rigved

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Introduction: Here the use of word "**Amplifying"** in the title of the essay is meant for the enhancement of the minute observations, insightful thinking and novel ideas of the Poet **Dirghatamas Auchathya** or probing his mind on the views mystically expressed by him in a very special poem of **Rigved**. There are **52 verses** in the hymn **Rv-1.164** which is generally considered by many Vedicists as the **Riddle hymn of Rigved** and therefore, it is necessary to address the various points implicitly brought out by the Composer in this outstanding but enigmatically composed a long Song. Based on some similar features noticed in the contents of **52 verses**, the verses of hymn are reorganised into different groups as given in **Table-1**.

Table-1: Regrouping of the verses of hymn Rv-1.164 on the basis of the Topics

Group	Subject of each Group	Order of the Verses
1	**Poet cryptically describes the use of words *Vacha* or *Vak/* Speech/ spoken words and also provides information on the metres /chhandas used for the composition of Rigvedic Poems**	**37, 34, 35, 45, 24, 23, 25, 41, 39, 16, 3, 40**
2	**"Earth as Cow"; "Surya/the Sun as her Calf" and the "Asvins"**	**8, 4, 28, 32, 9, 17, 18, 10, 33, 31, 5, 27**
3	**God "Surya" acts as the "Shaper of Day & Night", the Seasons, and the Year**	**11, 12, 13, 14, 44, 48, 2**
4	**God Surya acts as the "Rain-Maker" and the rain causes river Saraswati to flow**	**7, 29, 47, 51, 42, 52, 49**
5	**Riddle of "Two Birds Sitting on a Fig Tree"**	**20, 21, 22, 30, 38**
6	**Obscured description about the birth of "Seven Rishis"**	**15, 36**
7	**Three brothers and Special Yajna Rituals**	**1, 26, 19, 50**
8	**Concept of the "Oneness of God" who is also identified as "That One" in the hymn**	**6, 46**
9	**The Warriors eat roasted meat**	**43**

Additional information is given in the form of **notes** that follow the **comments**.

1. Poet cryptically describes the use of *Vacha*/*Vak*/ *Vani*/Speech/Spoken words to express his thoughts in the form of Song/*Richa* and also provides the information on the metres/chhandas commonly used for the composition of Rigvedic Poems:

In this section, the verses containing **Sanskrit keys words** directly related to the **Songs of Praise** such as ***Vacha***, ***Vak***, ***Vani***, ***Akshara***, ***Pada***, and the names of **different metres** mentioned in the hymn have been compiled and categorized in different subsections based on the similarities and/or variations noticed in the contents and then commented upon [1].

1.1 The story of Rta/ ऋत, the first-born inspires the Poet to speak his mind:

Rv-1.164,37: *an vi jānāmi yadivedamasmi niṇyaḥ saṃnaddho manasā carāmi |*
*yadā māgan **prathamajā ṛtasyādid vaco** aśnuve bhāghamasyāḥ ||*
न वि जानामि यदिवेदमस्मि निण्यः संनद्धो मनसा चरामि । यदा मागन्प्रथमजा ऋतस्यादिद्वाचो अश्नुवे भागमस्याः ॥

What thing I truly am, I know not clearly: mysterious, fettered in my mind I wander.
When the **first-born of holy Law approached me**, then of **this speech I first obtain a portion**.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,37

The Poet in the above verse tells us the fact that initially, he was in a confused state as he had a serious doubt about his inherent quality as the Visionary Poet. Then he suddenly remembered the concept of **first-born Rta**/ ***prathamajā ṛta*** and started composing/fashioning a **Speech**/***Vacha*** with full confidence as his ancestors did earlier.

In other words, the generations of the Priests very well knew that **ऋत/ *Rta*** is the **first principle of Vedic Philosophy** and it was the product of **systematic mental exercise** carried out by the **Forefathers of the Ancient Rishis** on the basis of **observation and analysis** of the **cyclic patterns of Natural Events/Processes.** This story provoked the Poet to do Poetry.

Note: The very first verse of the hymn **Rv-10.190** begins with word **ऋत**, wherein the Composer has emphasised that ***Rta*** came into existence before the creation of the various elements of Universe. As per the Poet of the said hymn, **prior existence of** the **Natural Laws** or **Orders** was the **essential step** for any creation process and no new thing can be fashioned or no progress in the world can happen without following the **celestial laws/*Rta***.

However, Vedic Scholars of yester-years and the modern-days do not stress this factual point in their articles/books and deliberately highlight some fictitious things described in the document like **Indra kills demon Vritra using Vajra and his Asva drawn Ratha** in their commentaries with the sole purpose to project Vedic Priests as the **nomadic**, and **heard keepers** means **illiterate People**, who had no understanding of the **Nature** at all.

1.2 Thought provoking questions and answers on the topic "Vacha/*Vaca* or Speech":

Rv-1.164,34: *pṛchāmi tvā* ***paramantaṃ pṛthivyāḥ*** *pṛchāmi yatra* ***bhuvanasyanābhiḥ*** |
pṛchāmi tvā vṛṣṇo aśvasya retaḥ pṛchāmi ***vācaḥ paramaṃ vyoma*** ||
पृच्छामिं त्वा॒ पर॒मन्तं॑ पृथि॒व्याः पृच्छामि॒ यत्र॒ भुव॑नस्य॒ नाभिः॑ । पृच्छामिं त्वा॒ वृष्णो॒ अश्व॑स्य॒ रेतः॑ पृच्छामिं वा॒चः पर॒मं व्यो॑म ॥

I ask thee of the **earth's extremest limit**, where is the **centre of the world**, I ask thee.
I ask thee of the Stallion's seed prolific, **I ask of highest heaven where Speech abideth**.

Rv-1.164,35: *iyaṃ vediḥ paro antaḥ pṛthivyā ayaṃ yajño bhuvanasya nābhiḥ* |
ayaṃ somo vṛṣṇo aśvasya reto brahmāyaṃ ***vācaḥparamaṃ vyoma*** ||
इ॒यं वेदि॒ः परो॒ अन्तः॑ पृथि॒व्या अ॒यं य॒ज्ञो भुव॑नस्य॒ नाभिः॑ । अ॒यं सोमो॒ वृष्णो॒ अश्व॑स्य॒ रेतो॑ ब्र॒ह्मायं वा॒चः पर॒मं व्यो॑म ॥

This **altar is the earth's extremest limit**; this **sacrifice of ours is the world's centre**.
The **Stallion's seed prolific is the Soma**; this **Brahman highest heaven where Speech abideth**.

Comments on the verses Rv-1.164,34 & 35

In the **verse-34**, the Poet has asked the intriguing questions to himself to raise the level of curiosity in the minds of the listeners (now readers) and then himself provided answers to them in the **verse-35**. **Table-2** gives proper explanation on the contents of two verses [1].

Table-2: Questions and Answers

Questions raised by the Composer in the verse-34	Answers provided in the verse-35
What is extreme limit of Earth?	**Fire alter** is the Earth's extreme limit.
What is the centre of World?	**Yajna/sacrifice** is the navel of World.
What is the **driving force**/***reta*** of stallion?	**Soma** is the power-house of stallion.
What is the highest heaven where Speech reside?	**Brahmin** is the highest heaven or a place where the Speech/ ***Vacha*** lives.

Note: In the verse **Rv-10.90,12** of the famous **Purusha-Sukta**, the **Brahmins** are described to have born from the **head of Purusha**. Similarly, in the verse **Rv-10.90,14**; **Heaven** is said to have originated from the **head of Purusha**. However, in the verse **Rv-1.164,35;** the **Brahmin** is believed to be the **highest house** or ***Heaven*** **of Speech**. It means to say that the Poets of different era had proper understanding of the **basic Vedic Ideas** as these aspects would have been taught to them by their ancestors, but they depicted the same feature in a different poetic style. In short, traditionally, the generations of **Brahmins** were assumed to have authority to make the **Poetic Speech /*Vacha*** as it stands for a very special mental activity that involves the creative use of **Brain/Head**.

1.3 A Major Difference between the grasping power of Common Men and Brahmins:

Rv-1.164,45: ***catvāri vāk*** *parimitā padāni tāni vidurbrāhmaṇā ye manīṣiṇaḥ* |
guhā trīṇi nihitā neṅghayanti turīyaṃ ***vāco*** *manuṣyā vadanti* ||
चत्वारि॒ वाक्परिमिता प॒दानि॒ तानिं विदुर्ब्राह्म॒णा ये मं॑नी॒षिणः॑ । गुहा॒ त्रीणि॒ निहिंता॒ नेङ्ग॑यन्ति तु॒रीयं॑ वा॒चो मं॑नु॒ष्या॑ वदन्ति ॥

Speech hath been measured out in **four divisions**, the **Brahmans** who have understanding know them.
Three kept in close concealment cause no motion; of **speech, men speak only the fourth division**.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,45

Content of the above verse indicates that the Poet has divided a verse composed by him into four parts. The Composer further states that, out of the four parts of the speech/verse, the common men can talk about only one-fourth its part, as three-fourth speech would remain hidden from them (or beyond their capabilities). Only the **Brahmins** or knowledgeable people can understand or decode the entire speech/verse of the Composer. It means to say that to understand content of a Vedic Poem, one needs more than knowing the literal meanings of the words. This is because, a Poet often uses different methods to express his ideas and feelings.

1.4 Thoughtfully Spoken Words in proper order shape the Seven Species of Metres:

Rv-1.164,24: *gāyatreṇa prati mimīte arkamarkeṇa* ***sāma*** *traiṣṭubhena* ***vākam*** |
vākena vākaṃ *dvipadā* ***catuṣpadākṣareṇa*** *mimate* ***sapta vāṇīḥ*** ||
गा॒य॒त्रेण॒ प्रति॑ मिमीते अ॒र्कम॒र्केण॒ साम॒ त्रैष्टु॑भेन वा॒कम् । वा॒केनं वा॒कं द्विप॑दा॒ चतु॑ष्पदा॒क्षरे॑ण मिमते स॒प्त वाणीः॑ ॥

With **Gayatri** he measures out the praise-song, **Sama** with praise-song, triplet with the **Tristup**.
The triplet with the **two or four-foot measure**, and with the syllable they form **seven metres**.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,24

There are total **seven voices or metres** / ***saptá vā́ṇīḥ*** means **seven types of chhandas** /speeches/***Vak*** used for the composition of different **Praise-songs** comprising of different numbers of words**.** Out of these **speeches**/***Vak, Gayatri*** and ***Tristubh*** are the most commonly used to compose the **Vedic Poems**. **Tristup** has **triplet** in which its verse may contain two or four feet/***pada***. It means to say that the Composer was aware of the seven different species of Vedic metres devised by his forefathers and regularly used by the generations of Poets.

1.5 Making of the different Vedic metres with the help of *Aksharas* and *Padas*:

Here the four verses that speak about the role of ***Aksharas*** and ***Padas*** in shaping some Vedic metres, are discussed.

Rv-1.164,23: *yad **gāyatre** adhi **gāyatra**māhitaṃ **traiṣṭubhād** vā **traiṣṭubhaṃ** niratakṣata |*
*yad vā **jagajjagatyāhitaṃ padaṃ** ya it tad viduste **amṛtatvamānaśuḥ** ||*
यद्गा॑यत्रे अधि॑ गाय॒त्रमाहि॑तं॒ त्रैष्टु॑भाद्वा॒ त्रैष्टु॑भं नि॒रत॑क्षत । यद्वा॒ जग॒ज्जग॒त्याहि॑तं प॒दं य इत्तद्वि॒दुस्ते अ॑मृत॒त्वमा॑नशुः ॥

How on the **Gayatri**, the **Gayatri** was based, how from the **Tristup** they fashioned the **Tristup** forth.
How on the **Jagati** was based the **Jagati**, they who know this have **won themselves immortal life**.

Rv-1.164,25: ***jagatā** sindhuṃ divyasthabhāyad **rathantare sūryaṃ** paryapaśyat |*
***gāyatrasya** samidhastisra āhustato mahnā prariric mahitvā ||*
जग॑ता॒ सिन्धुं॑ दि॒व्यस्तभायद्रथंत॒रे सूर्यं॑ पर्यपश्यत् । गा॒य॒त्रस्य॑ स॒मिध॑स्ति॒स्र आ॑हु॒स्ततो॑ म॒ह्ना प्र रि॑रिचे महि॒त्वा ॥

With **Jagati** the flood in heaven he stablished, and saw the **Sun** in the **Rathantara Saman**.
Gayatri hath, they say, **three brands for kindling**: hence it excels in majesty and vigour.

Rv-1.164,41: *gaurīrmimāya salilāni takṣatyekapadī **dvipadī sā catuṣpadī** |*
***aṣṭāpadī navapadī** babhūvuṣī **sahasrākṣarā** parame vyoman ||*
गौ॒रीर्मि॑माय सलि॒लानि॒ तक्ष॒त्येक॑पदी द्वि॒पदी॒ सा चतु॑ष्पदी । अ॒ष्टाप॑दी॒ नव॑पदी बभू॒वुषी॑ स॒हस्रा॑क्षरा पर॒मे व्यो॑मन् ॥

Forming the water-floods, the buffalo hath lowed, **one-footed** or **two-footed or four footed**, she,
Who hath become **eight-footed or hath got nine feet**, **thousand syllabled** in the sublimest heaven.

Rv-1.164,39: ***ṛco akṣare parame vyoman** yasmin devā adhi viśve niṣeduḥ |*
*yastan na veda kiṃ **ṛcā** kariṣyati ya it tad vidusta ime samāsate ||*
ऋ॒चो अ॒क्षरे॑ पर॒मे व्यो॑म॒न्यस्मि॑न्दे॒वा अधि॒ विश्वे॑ निषे॒दुः । यस्तन्न वेद॒ किमृ॒चा क॑रिष्यति॒ य इत्तद्वि॒दुस्त इ॒मे समा॑सते ॥

Upon what **syllable of holy praise-song**, as twere their **highest heaven**, the **Gods repose them**,
Who knows not this, what will he do with **praise-song**? But they who know it well sit here assembled.

Comment on the verses Rv-1.164,23; 25; 41 and 39

In the above four verses, the Poet has briefly explained the basis of variation in the Vedic metres like **Gayatri**, **Tristubh**, **Jagati** etc. that are commonly used for the composition of different Praise-songs. Each verse/***Richa/mantra*** comprises of many ***Aksharas***/syllables (a

basic unit of speech) and many syllables make a ***Pada***/foot. However, all verses are not alike, but there exists variation in number of ***Padas***. Depending on a type of metre, in a verse, ***Padas/***feet could be one or two or four or eight or nine and may consist a thousand syllables.

In the verse **Rv-1.164,39**; the Poet implicitly says that ***Richa/mantra*** thus formed with the different combinations of ***Aksharas***/syllables, has made us to laud the Gods who live in Heaven. A person who does not know the **structural features of a Praise-song**, would not achieve anything even though he/she composes a Poem. However, those who understand the **importance of various elements of a Poem**, would compose a meaningful song and then come together to sing it loudly to glorify the Gods. In other words, all Rigvedic Poets were well versed with the **basics of the Song of Praise**.

1.6 Feminine quality of the Seven Voices who are also described as the Seven Sisters:

In this sub-section, the verses containing Sanskrit words such as ***Stri***, ***Pumsa***, ***Kavi***, ***Sapta Svasaro***, ***Ga***, ***Aghnya*** etc. are placed together for consideration and comment.

Rv-1.164,16: ***striyaḥ satīstānu me puṃsa āhuḥ*** *paśyadakṣaṇvān navi cetadandhaḥ* |
kaviryaḥ *putraḥ sa īmā ciketa yastā vijānāt sa pituṣ pitāsat* ||
स्त्रियः सतीस्ताँ उं मे पुंस आंहुः पश्यंदक्षण्वान्न वि चेंतदन्धः। कविर्यः पुत्रः स ईमा चिंकेत यस्ता विंजानात्स पितुष्पितासंत् ॥

They told me **these were males**, **though truly females**: he who hath eyes sees this, the blind discerns not.
The **son** who is a **sage** hath comprehended: who knows this rightly is his **father's father**.

Rv-1.164,3: *imaṃ rathamadhi ye* ***sapta tasthuḥ saptacakraṃ sapta vahantyaśvāḥ*** |
sapta svasāro *abhi saṃ navante yatra* ***gavāṃ*** *nihitā* ***sapta nāma*** ||
इमं रथमधि ये सप्त तस्थुः सप्तचक्रं सप्त वंहन्त्यश्वाः । सप्त स्वसारो अभि सं नवन्ते यत्र गवां निहिंता सप्त नामं ॥

The **seven** who on the **seven-wheeled car are mounted have horses**, **seven in tale**, who draw them onward.
Seven Sisters utter songs of praise together, in whom the **names** of the **seven Cows** are treasured.

Rv-1.164,40: *sūyavasād bhagavatī hi bhūyā atho vayaṃ bhagavantaḥ syāma* |
addhi tṛṇamaghnye viśvadānīṃ piba śuddhamudakamācarantī ||
सूयवसाद्भगंवती हि भूया अथों वयं भगंवन्तः स्याम । अद्धि तृणंमघ्ये विश्वदानीं पिबं शुद्धमुंदकमाचरंन्ती ॥

Forunate mayst thou be with goodly pasture, and may we also be exceeding wealthy.

Feed on the grass, O **Cow, at every season**, and coming hitherward **drink limpid water**.

Comment on the verses Rv-1.164,16; 3 and 40

Poet in the verse **Rv-1.164,16** makes it clear that even though some People termed the **Poetic Speech** as the **males** (plural), but in reality these are the **females**. A person who has proper vision can see this (differentiate) and a blind man cannot grasp it. This is probably due to soft, kind, empathetic, sensitive and expressive qualities of the spoken **words** /***Vak*** used in the songs and hence the names of **seven Vedic chhandas/metres** fall in the category of the **feminine gender**. Please note that Rigvedic Poets did not use harsh words even for the villainous characters like Vritra, Ahi, Pipru, Arbuda, Shushna, Shambara and Namuchi etc.

In the verse **Rv-1.164,3**; the Composer has given more stress on the word ***Sapt***/seven which implicitly tells us that **seven flowing speeches/** ***sapta vahantyaśvāḥ*** who are secretly named after **sacred cows** used by the **seven sisters** to sing the Praise-songs (indirectly means seven Priests who are stationed at the fire-alter, use **seven female voices/*sapta svasaro*** or the **seven metres** to praise the Gods in the form of different Vedic Poems).

Verse **Rv-1.164,40** illustrates that **a cow** or **holy speech** should regularly visit the place of **Yajna** and eat grass and drink pure water so that the Priests would derive pleasure from it. It means to say that when a Poet wants to compose a new song on the occasion of Yajna ritual, he needs the blessings from the **Speech or Cow**.

Note: To understand the deeper meanings of the verses related ***Vacha***/***Vak***/***Vani*** of the hymn **Rv-1.164**; it is requested to refer to the **Last Mandala hymn Rv-10.71** as it talks about the use of ***Vacha/ holy speech*** at the time of **Yajna**. Following verse taken from the hymn **Rv-10.71** would throw light on the same [**1**].

Rv-10.71,3: ***yajñena vācaḥ*** *padavīyamāyan tāmanvavindannṛ**ṣi**ṣupraviṣṭām* |

tāmābhṛtyā vyadadhuḥ purutrā tāṃ ***saptarebhā*** *abhi saṃ navante* ||

With **sacrifice the trace of Vak** they followed, and found her harbouring within the **Rsis**.

They brought her, dealt her forth in many places: **seven singers** make her tones resound in concert.

In the above verse the Poet states that ***Vacha***/**sacred speech** is closely associated with **Yajna ritual** and since ancient time, it was **secretly nurtured by the Rishis** (means it was a *family secret* and hence remained with the members of Priestly Community). Now **सप्तरेभा/seven singers** use it to praise the Gods. Apart from the word ***Vacha/Vac*** *(appears 8 times),* other common key words found in both hymns are ***Richa***, ***Gayatri*** and **Brahmin**.

2. "Earth as Cow"; "Surya as her Calf" and the Asvins:

In this section, based on the presence of the Sanskrit key words like ***Rta, Mata, Pita,*** **Dyaus,** ***Divo,*** **Prithvi,** ***Bhumi, Vatsa, Gam, Gauram,*** following verses have been selected and then arranged to decode hidden massage in them.

2.1 As per *Rta*/ ऋत, a physical union of female and male is necessary to create progeny:

Rv-1.164,8: ***mātā pitaraṃ ṛta*** *ā babhāja* ***dhītya****gre manasā saṃ hi jagme* |
*sā bībhatsur****garbharasā*** *nividdhā namasvanta idupavākamīyuḥ* ||
मा॒ता पि॒तर॑मृ॒त आ ब॑भाज धी॒त्यग्रे॒ मन॑सा॒ सं हि ज॒ग्मे ।सा बी॑भ॒त्सुर्गभ॑रिसा॒ निवि॑द्धा॒ नमं॑स्वन्त॒ इदु॑पवा॒कमी॑युः ॥

 # The Mother gave the Sire his **share of Order**: **with thought**, at first, **she wedded him in spirit**.
She, the coy Dame, was filled with dew prolific: with adoration men approached to praise her.

Comment on the verse RV-1.164,8

Through the above verse, the Poet has described a natural method of producing offspring by the human beings. Here the Poet says that when a male mates with a female, then only a baby is born, and the process of creation of a new being is governed by ***Rta***/ **ऋत** or the **cosmic order** which is applicable to all including the Deities. The Composer has implicitly described the **birth of the Gods from Earth and Heaven** when he mentions that **Mother (Earth)** though a distance apart from **Father (Heaven)**, but **she mentally unites** with **Heaven** to give birth to various **Gods**. In other words, a **physical engagement of the two opposite sex is an essential step to produce a child /offspring and is the order of Nature (*Rta*)**.

2.2. Cow/Earth who gives birth to a Calf/Surya and keeps a watch on a new born:

In this subsection, the verses depicting similarity in contents have been placed together and commented.

Rv-1.164,4: *ko dadarśa prathamaṃ* ***jāyamānamasthanvantaṃ yadanasthā bibharti*** |
bhūmyā *asurasṛgātmā kva svit ko vidvāṃsamupa gāt praṣṭumetat* ||
को द॑दर्श प्रथ॒मं जाय॑मानमस्थ॒न्वन्तं॒ यद॑न॒स्था बिभ॑र्ति । भूम्या॒ असु॒रसृ॑गा॒त्मा क्व॑ स्वि॒त्को वि॒द्वांस॒मुप॑ गा॒त्प्रष्टु॑मे॒तत् ॥

Who hath beheld him as **he sprang to being**, seen how the **boneless one supports the bony**?
Where is the **blood of earth**, the life, the spirit? Who may approach the man who knows, to ask it?

Rv-1.164,28: ***gaura****mīmedanu* ***vatsaṃ*** *miṣantaṃ mūrdhānaṃ hiṃṃ akṛṇon* ***mātavā*** *u* |
sṛkvāṇaṃ gharmamabhi vāvaśānā mimāti māyuṃ payate payobhiḥ ||
गौरमीमेदनु वत्सं मिषन्तं मूर्धानं हिङ्ङकृणोन्मातवा उ । सृक्कांणं घर्ममभि वावशाना मिमाति मायुं पयते पयोभिः ॥

The **cow hath lowed** after her blinking **youngling**; **she licks his forehead**, as she lows, to form it.
His mouth she fondly calls to her warm udder, and suckles him with milk while gently lowing.

Rv-1.164,32: *ya īṃ cakāra na so* ***asya veda*** *ya īṃ dadarśa hirugin nutasmāt* |
sa ***māturyonā*** *parivīto antarbahuprajā nirṛtimā viveśa* ||
य ईं चकार न सो अस्य वेद य ईं ददर्श हिरुगिन्नु तस्मात् । स मातुर्योना परिवीतो अन्तर्बहुप्रजा निरृतिमा विवेश ॥

He who hath made him cloth not comprehend him; from him who saw him **surely is he hidden**.
He, **yet enveloped in his Mother's bosom**, source of **much life, hath sunk into destruction**.

Rv-1.164,9: *yuktā* ***mātāsīd dhuri dakṣiṇāyā*** *atiṣṭhad* ***garbho*** *vṛjanīṣvantaḥ* |
amīmed ***vatso*** *anu* ***gāmapaśyad*** *viśvarūpyaṃ triṣu yojaneṣu* ||
युक्ता मातासीद्धुरि दक्षिणाया अतिष्ठद्गर्भो वृजनीष्वन्तः । अमींमेद्वत्सो अनु गामपश्यद्विश्वरूप्यं त्रिषु योजनेषु ॥

Yoked was the **Mother to the boon Cow's car-pole**: in the dank rows of cloud the **Infant rested**.
Then the **Calf lowed, and looked upon the Mother**, the **Cow** who wears all shapes in three directions.

Rv-1.164,17: *avaḥ pareṇa para enāvareṇa padā* ***vatsaṃ*** *bibhratī* ***gauru****dasthāt* |
sā kadrīcī kaṃ svidardhaṃ parāgāt kva ***svitsūte*** *nahi yūthe antaḥ* ||
अवः परेण पर एनावरेण पदा वत्सं बिभ्रती गौरुदंस्थात् । सा कद्रीची कं स्विदर्धं परागात्क्व स्वित्सूते नहि यूथे अन्तः ॥

Beneath the upper realm, above this lower, bearing her **calf at foot the Cow** hath risen.
Witherward, to what place hath she departed? Where calves she? Not amid this **herd of cattle**.

Rv-1.164,18: *avaḥ pareṇa* ***pitaraṃ yo asyānuveda para enāvareṇa*** |
kavīyamānaḥ *ka iha pra vocad* ***devaṃ manaḥ*** *kuto adhi prājātam* ||
अवः परेण पितरं यो अस्यानुवेदं पर एनावरेण । कवीयमानः क इह प्र वोचद्देवं मनः कुतो अधि प्रजातम् ॥

Who, that the **father of this Calf discerneth beneath the upper realm**, above the lower,
Showing himself a sage, may here declare it? Whence hath the **Godlike spirit** had its rising?

Rv-1.164,10: ***tisro mātṝstrīn pitṝn*** *bibhradeka ūrdhvastasthau nemava glāpayanti |*

mantrayante ***divo*** *amuṣya pṛṣṭhe* ***viśvavidaṃ vāca****maviśvaminvām ||*

तिस्रो मातॄस्त्रीन्पितॄन्बिभ्रदेकं ऊर्ध्वस्तंस्थौ नेमवं ग्लापयन्ति । मन्त्रयंन्ते दिवो अमुष्यं पृष्ठे विंश्वविदं वाचमविंश्वमिन्वाम् ॥

Bearing **three Mothers and three Fathers**, **single he stood erect**: they never make him weary.

There on the pitch of **heaven** they speak together in **speech** all-knowing but not all-impelling.

Comment on the verses Rv-1.164,4; 28; 32; 9; 17; 18; 10

In the beginning of verse **Rv-1.164,4**; the Poet asks a question, who has witnessed the birth of first being? He further says that, actually a boneless feature (**waters/fluid**) carries a bony (**Surya- has a physical form/shape**) upwards. It means, daily in the morning, the **Sun** rises from the waters/sea (boneless) and everybody sees it. However, exact location of **his birth is not known**. This is because, in the second line of the said verse, the Composer raises another probing question, who has seen **blood and breath of Earth** (***Bhumi***)? It implies that the Poet believes in **Earth is the Mother of the Sun**. However, as nobody has seen the **blood and breath of Earth** (while delivering a baby, generally, some blood comes out from mother's womb and can be seen at the place of delivery /mother commonly bleeds at the time of delivery of a child) and hence the Composer claims that as **no person has seen the blood and heavy breathing of Earth**, and hence it cannot be ascertained when and where **Mother Earth** gave birth to **Surya/the Sun**.

Verse-32 depicts a calf (Surya) does not know his Father (Heaven) who watches the development of his progeny from a long distance. As the calf is enveloped in his Mother's womb (Earth) who already has many offspring (old Deities), but only this particular calf enters into **destruction** means has limited life (as other Deities are believed to be immortal and invisible).

Contents of the **verses-28** describes that how a new-born is looked after by its Mother. In the **verse-28** the Poet talks about Mother kisses the forehead of a blinking calf and then feeds her milk through its warm mouth.

Verse-9 depicts that just to make a new born/infant (**Surya**) to start walking/moving, **Mother** (Earth) yokes him to a **Cow** (here **Cow** stands for **Usha/Dawn**) and thus **he** (the Sun) now begins his daily journey by following **Usha/Dawn** and also looks downward to watch the movement of **real cows** of different colour/shaped on the Mother Earth.

Content of the verse **Rv-1.164,17** confuses the reader as the Poet has posed a question, **where was the Cow's calf was born?** He says that, a calf (Surya) has actually ascended from the feet of Cow (Earth), but exact location of his birth is still not known (see verse-4), definitely a calf/Surya does not belong to the herd (comprising of other Gods who are generally considered as the immortals and invisible).

In the **verse-18**, the Composer tells us that a fully grown now moves under the upper realm and above the lower realm and wants to know who his father is. As a visionary Poet, he asks a question; who would explain me, from whose divine mind, this New God was born? In other words, as ***Surya***/ the **Sun God** is considered the **visible mortal being**, the Poet is not aware of, who has called ***Surya*** as the **divine being**? Or who first declared the **Sun as God**?

Verse-10 communicates us that **He** (***Surya***) stands erect and bears **Three Mothers** and **Three Fathers**, yet does not feel tired or weary. On the back of Heaven, the Priests generally discuss about **Surya** or speak about **him** to show their knowledge, but that does not provoke everyone to compose a **Praise-song**. It means to say that, despite knowing the facts about the **Sun God**, only a few Rigvedic Poets take **him seriously** and laud **Surya/the Sun** in Poems.

2.3 Surya/ the Sun introduces himself as the Son of Dyaus and Prithvi:

Rv-1.164,33: ***dyaurme pitā*** *janitā nābhiratra bandhurme* ***mātā pṛthivīmahīyam*** |
uttānayoścamvoryonirantaratrā ***pitā duhiturgharbhamādhāt*** ||
द्यौर्मे पि॒ता जं॑नि॒ता नाभि॒रत्र॒ बन्धु॑र्मे मा॒ता पृ॑थि॒वी म॒हीयम् । उ॒त्ता॒नयोश्चम्वो॒ र्योनि॑र॒न्तरत्रा॑ पि॒ता दु॑हि॒तुर्गर्भ॒माधा॑त् ॥

Dyaus is my Father, **my begetter: kinship is here**. This **great earth is my kin and Mother**.
Between the wide-spread world-halves is the birth place; the **Father laid the Daughter's germ within it**.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,33

In the first line of the above verse, on behalf of ***Surya***/the **Sun**, the Composer states that **Heaven** is the **God's Father** and **Earth is his mother**.

However, in the second line of the said verse, the Poet has added twist to the story, when he says that **Father has impregnated his germs in his daughter's womb**. This is probably based on the general observation of the Poet on the **daily movement of Sun** who follows **Usha** or **Dawn** in the early morning. Due to this natural feature, the Composer might

have thought as the **Sun** a male **child of Heaven** always goes behind **Usha,** the daughter of Heaven **(Dawn)** or often **chases her**, means she (Dawn) is as good as the **motherly figure for the Sun**. Some Vedic Scholars have commented on the second line of the verse as if the Composer wants to portray an incestuous relationship between Father and Daughter. Therefore, these Vedicist interpreted the second line **as** Heaven has injected his semen into Dawn's organ. However, considering the description given in the **first line of the said verse is correct**, wherein the Composer has distinctly identified **Father and Mother of the Sun**, hence we can say that the **Father** (Heaven) has handed over his **new offspring** (***Surya***) to his Daughter (***Usha***), as if there exists mother and son relationship between **Usha/Dawn** and **Surya/Sun** (this is based on a natural phenomenon, the **Sun follows Dawn** like a child/kid).

2.4 Poet describes Surya as *Gopa*/herdsman who moves daily in the world:

Rv-1.164,31: *apaśyaṃ **gopāmani**padyamānamā ca parā ca pathibhiścarantam* |
sa sadhrīcīḥ sa viśūcīrvasāna ā varīvarti bhuvaneṣvantaḥ ||
अपश्यं गोपामनिपद्यमानमा च परा च पथिभिश्चरन्तम् । स सध्रीचीः स विषूचीर्वसान आ वरीवर्ति भुवनेष्वन्तः ॥

I saw the **Herdsman**, him who never stumbles, approaching by his pathways and departing.
He, clothed with gathered and **diffusive splendour**, within the **worlds continually travels**.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,31

Generally speaking, the herds of domesticated animals go for grazing or move from one place to another mostly during day time means when **Surya** or his light is seen everywhere. From this point of view, the Poet has said that he saw the **Herdsman**/***Gopa*** in the form of the **Sun God** who travels daily without failure and covers the whole world.

2.5 Cryptic description of the story of Surya/the Sun and the Seven Metres:

Rv-1.164,5: *pākaḥ pṛchāmi manasāvijānan devānāmenā nihitā padāni* |
*vatse baṣkaye.adhi **sapta tantūn** vi tatnire kavaya otavāu* ||
पाकः पृच्छामि मनसाविजानन्देवानांमेना निहिता पदानि । वत्से बष्कयेऽधि सप्त तन्तून्वि तंत्निरे कवय ओतवा उ ॥

Unripe in mind, in spirit undiscerning, I ask of these the Gods' established places.
For up above the yearling **Calf the sages**, **to form a web, their own seven threads have woven**.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,5

Here also the Composer has used the term ***Vatsa/* Calf** to indicate **Surya**. When there is a **calf**, then there has to be its **mother** / **cow** too. When the **Sun** is considered as **Aditya**, then **Aditi** becomes his **mother** and when **Heaven and Earth** are treated as the **Universal Parents** of **All Deities**, then **Earth** turns out to be the mother of the **Sun god**.

As depicted in the verse **Rv-1.164,5**; the **calf** is considered as a complete ball or full grown, means the Composer is talking about the full round but **early morning Sun** (complete fireball) to whom the Poet wants to bring the calf under his control by praying or attracting the attention of the God using a **web of seven threads / strings** which hints at the use of **seven metres** for the composition of the **Praise-songs**. In other words, to laud the **Sun** at the time of **morning Yajna**, the Vedic Composer may use **any of the Seven Metres** known to him. The fact is that, the phrase **seven metres**/***Sapta Vanih*** is also mentioned in the verse **Rv-1.164,24** of the same hymn. Please bear in mind that the hymns independently addressed to **Surya/the Sun** are found only in **Mandala-1** and **10**, the **Last Two Mandalas of Rigved**.

Note: As per the Hindu legends, there is a story indicating the **Sun's chariot is drawn by seven horses** and the names of seven horses are given as **Gayatri, Brihati, Ushnih, Jagati, Trishtubha, Anushtubha, and Pankti.** These are nothing but the names of **Seven Metres/Chhandas** used by the Rigvedic Composers to compose the **Poems of Praise (for details, see hymn Rv-10.130)**.

2.6 Cow and Asvins:

Rv-1.164,27: *hiṅkṛṇvatī **vasupatnī vasūnāṃ vatsamichantī** manasābhyāgāt |*
*duhām**aśvibhyāṃ** payo **aghnyeyaṃ** sa vardhatāṃ mahate saubhagāya ||*

हिङ्कृण्वती वसुपत्नी वसूनां वत्समिच्छन्ती मनसाभ्यागात् । दुहामश्विभ्यां पयो अघ्न्येयं सा वर्धतां महते सौभगाय ॥

She, lady of all treasure, is come hither yearning in spirit for **her calf and lowing**.

May this **cow yield her milk for both the Asvins**, and may she prosper to our high advantage.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,27

Based on the presence of the words like ***Vasupatni***, ***Vatsa, Asvins, Aghnya,*** it can be said that the Composer wants to convey us that like a mistress of wealth who makes deep sound for her calf, this cow should give milk for **Asvins** and make us to propsper with good fortune. Here **Cow** may be considered as **Earth**, the **Mother of Asvins,** who needs to provide enough milk to the twins. Similarly, the Poet has expectation from **his cow** (animal) and hence demands more milk from her so that she (cow) would make him very rich or bring fortune for him.

<u>3.</u> God "Surya" as the "Shaper of Day & Night, the Seasons, and the Year":

<u>3.1.</u> In this subsection, the verses containing Sanskrit words such as ***Chakra***, ***Arah***, ***Mithuna***, ***Rta***, ***Putra***, ***Nabhi***, ***Ardha***, ***Sana, Ritu, Sanvatsara*** and ***various numbers*** have been collected and discussed as under.

Rv-1.164,11: ***dvādaśāraṃ*** *nahi tajjarāya varvarti* ***cakraṃ pari dyāṃ ṛtasya*** |
ā putrā ***agne*** *mithunāso atra* ***sapta śatāni viṃśatiśca tasthuḥ*** ||
द्वादशारं नहि तज्जरायु वर्वर्ति चक्रं परि द्यामृतस्य ।आ पुत्रा अग्ने मिथुनासो अत्र सप्त शतानि विंशतिश्च तस्थुः ॥

Formed with **twelve spokes, by length of time**, unweakened, **rolls round the heaven this wheel of during Order**.

Herein established, joined in pairs together, **seven hundred Sons and twenty stand**, O Agni.

Rv-1.164,12: ***pañcapādaṃ pitaraṃ dvādaśākṛtiṃ diva āhuḥ pare ardhe*** *purīṣiṇam* |
atheme anya upare vicakṣaṇaṃ ***saptacakre ṣaḷara āhurarpitam*** ||
पञ्चपादं पितरं द्वादशाकृतिं दिव आहुः परे अर्धे पुरीषिणम् । अथेमे अन्य उपरे विचक्षणं सप्तचक्रे षळर आहुरर्पितम् ॥

#They call him in the farther half of **heaven the Sire five-footed, of twelve forms**, wealthy in watery store.

These others say that he, **God with far-seeing eyes**, is mounted on the lower **seven-wheeled, six spoked car**.

Rv-1.164,13: ***pañcāre cakre*** *parivartamāne tasminnā tasthurbhuvanāni viśvā* |
tasya nākṣastapyate bhūribhāraḥ sanādeva na śīryate sanābhiḥ ||
पञ्चारे चक्रे परिवर्तमाने तस्मिन्ना तस्थुर्भुवनानि विश्वा । तस्य नाक्षस्तप्यते भूरिभारः सनादेव न शीर्यते सनाभिः ॥ १.१६४.१३

Upon this **five-spoked wheel** revolving ever all living creatures rest and are dependent.

Its axle, heavy-laden, is not heated: the **nave from ancient time remains unbroken**.

Rv-1.164,14: *sanemi cakramajaraṃ vi vāvṛta uttānāyāṃ* ***daśa yuktā vahanti*** |
sūryasya *cakṣū rajasaityāvṛtaṃ tasminnārpitā bhuvanāni viśvā* ||
सनेमि चक्रमजरं वि वावृत उत्तानायां दशं युक्ता वहन्ति । सूर्यस्य चक्षू रजसैत्यावृतं तस्मिन्नार्पिता भुवनानि विश्वा ॥

The wheel revolves, unwasting, with its felly: **ten draw it,** yoked to the far-stretching car-pole.

The **Sun's eye moves encompassed by the region**: on **him dependent rest all living creatures**.

Rv-1.164,44: ***trayaḥ keśina ṛtuthā*** *vi cakṣate* ***saṃvatsare vapata eka eṣām*** |

viśvameko *abhi caṣṭe śacībhirdhrājirekasya dadṛśena rūpam* ||

त्रयः केशिनं ऋतुथा वि चक्षते संवत्सरे वपत एकं एषाम् । विश्वमेको अभि चष्टे शचीभिर्ध्राजिरेकस्य ददृशे न रूपम् ॥

Three with long tresses show in ordered season. One of them **sheareth when the year is ended**.

One with his powers the universe regardeth: Of one, the sweep is seen, but his figure.

Rv-1.164,48: ***dvādaśa pradhayaścakramekaṃ trīṇi nabhyāni ka u tacciketa*** |

tasmin sākaṃ triśatā na śaṅkavo.arpitāḥ ṣaṣṭirna calācalāsaḥ ||

द्वादश प्रधयश्चक्रमेकं त्रीणि नभ्यानि क उ तच्चिकेत । तस्मिन्साकं त्रिंशता न शङ्कवोऽर्पिताः षष्टिर्न चलाचलासः ॥

Twelve are the fellies, and **the wheel is single; three are the naves**. What man hath understood it?

Therein are set together **spokes three hundred and sixty**, which in nowise can be loosened.

Comment on the verses Rv-1.164,11; 12; 13; 14; 44 and 48

In the above six verses, the Poet has proposed a **Wordy Model** of a "**Moving Ratha having a Spoked Wheel** or ***Kaal Chakra*****"** so as to describe **Yearly time-scale**. It also manifests that the Rigvedic People were fully aware about the role of ***Surya*** (see **verse-12-** wherein the Poet has used the phrase **"*as god with far-seeing Eye",*** and in the **verse-14;** he has specifically mentioned the same as ***Sun's Eye*****).** This clearly signifies the role of **Surya** as the **"Time-keeper"** means **real shaper of the day/night**, **seasons**, and **the year** or **the facilitator of the wheel of seasons**/***Ritu-chakra***.

Verse-48 informs us that a **year** consists of **360 days** full (including nights as well) in total **or 360 days** and **360 nights** when treated separately and then added together that becomes **720** (**seven hundred and twenty Sons)** as mentioned in **verse-11**.

The **Verses- 11, 12,** and **48** also intimate us that there are **twelve months** in a year.

In the **verses 11**, and **12;** there are indirect references of presence **Five Seasons** in a year. This can happen only when there is **no rain** during the **Rainy season**. It means, due to **Vritra** effect (real Drought) ***Varsha*** ritu goes missing, and hence only **Five Seasons** (of two months each means *ten months* plus two months dry months/drought) are experienced.

Three naves phrase found in the **verse-48** may be taken as **Three Main Seasons** of the year generally experienced in the **Indian Sub-continent** namely, **Rainy**, **Winter**, and **Summer.** In other words, the **Yearly changes that occur in the World** (moving **Ratha**) are

caused by **Surya**. It means to say that, among the **Several Rigvedic Characters** (including the Deities of their imaginations of the Priests), the Poet clearly visualizes, the **Sun** (**Surya**) as the "**Only Entity Responsible for the Rotation of seasons with Time".** In other words, through these verses, the Poet of the hymn has highlighted the fact that the **Cyclic** or **Periodical Occurrence of the various Seasons in a Year** in the **World** is only due to God **Sun/Surya**. This holds true even today as well.

3.2. Surya, three seasons and the Seven Adityas hinted in the verse Rv-1.164,2:

Rv-1.164,2: *sapta yuñjanti rathamekacakrameko aśvo vahati saptanāmā |*
trinābhi cakramajaramanarvaṃ yatremā viśvā bhuvanādhitasthuḥ ||
स॒प्त युं॑ञ्जन्ति॒ रथ॒मेक॑चक्र॒मेको॒ अश्वो॑ वहति स॒प्तना॑मा । त्रि॒नाभिं॑ च॒क्रम॒जर॑मन॒र्वं यत्रे॒मा विश्वा॒ भुव॒नाधि॑ त॒स्थुः ॥

Seven to the one-wheeled chariot yoke the Courser; bearing **seven names** the **single Courser draws it**.
Three-naved the wheel is, sound and undecaying, whereon are resting all these worlds of being.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,2

The Poet in the **verse-2** has cryptically described how the world moves forward in a year (progress of a ***Kaal-chakra***/the wheel of time with ***Ritu-chakra***/the wheel of seasons).

The key terms used by the Poet in the **verse-2** are re-interpreted as follows.

All Seven: Seven Adityas (who rule the world as per the eternal law/Rta)

Single wheeled Ratha: Yearly motion of the World (space includes Heaven and Earth)

Single Asva: Surya/the Sun (Asva stands for **Power**, **Source of Energy** of the World).

Three Naves: **three main seasons experienced in India/Summer, Rainy, and Winter.**

In other words**,** it is due to **Surya, Yearly Movement of the World** is possible.

When the Composer in the **verse-2** says that a **Ratha has a Single Wheel**, and is drawn by a single **Asva**, means in his poetic style, he wants to convey us that, in reality, the year passes through three seasons and it is the **annual movement of Sun** that causes three seasons in the world.

4. God Surya as the "Rain-Maker" and the rain fed river Saraswati:

In this section, the verses containing **Sanskrit words** such as '***Rta***, ***kshir***, ***Ga***, ***Udak***, ***Guara***, ***Suparna***, ***Apa***, ***Prithvi***, ***Ghrita***, ***krisna***, ***Vidyut***, ***Bhumi***, ***Parjanya***, ***Diva***, ***Jivanti***, ***Jivati, Vrishti, Samudra*** etc. have been combined and studied.

4.1 Surya as the "Rain Cloud Shaper":

In the following verse, the Composer has explained how rain cloud is formed from the sea water.

Rv-1.164,7: *iha bravītu ya īmaṅgha vedāsya **vāmasya nihitaṃ padaṃ veḥ*** |
śīrṣṇaḥ kṣīraṃ duhrate gāvo** asya vavriṃ vasānā **udakaṃ padāpuḥ ||

इ॒ह ब्र॑वीतु॒ य ई॑म॒ङ्ग॑ वेदा॒स्य वा॒मस्य॒ निहि॑तं प॒दं वेः । शी॒र्ष्णः क्षी॒रं दु॑ह्रते॒ गावो॑ अस्य व॒व्रिं व॑सा॒ना उद॒कं प॒दापु॑ः ॥

Let him who knoweth presently declare it, this **lovely Bird's securely founded station**.
Forth from **his head the Cows draw milk**, and, wearing his vesture, with their foot have drunk the water.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,7

The Composer in the **verse-7** tells the fact that let the knowledgeable person or the wise man declare that ***He*** (**Surya**/the **Sun**) is behind this act. The Cows (***Gava***) derive milk from **him** practically means; **rain-clouds** get water from **his head** means **his thoughts**. The **Cows/clouds** have drunk the water from **His Feet**, means the **rain-clouds** are formed due to vaporization of ocean water that occurs when the rays of Sun (**heat**) fall on the earth.

4.2. Surya as the "Rain-maker:

Once the rain clouds are formed, the next step is their aerial movement in the mid-region that leads to the change of location and then comes actual rain fall. These things have been described in the following two verses.

Rv-1.164,29: *ayaṃ sa śiṅkte yena **gaurabhīvṛtā** mimāti māyuṃ dhvasanāvadhi śritā* |
sā cittibhirni hi cakāra martyaṃ vidyud bhavantī prati vavrimauhata ||

अ॒यं स शिं॑ङ्क्ते॒ येन॒ गौर॒भीवृ॑ता॒ मिमा॑ति मा॒युं ध्व॒सना॒वधिं श्रि॒ता।सा चि॒त्तिभि॒र्नि हि च॒कार॒ मर्त्यं॑ वि॒द्युद्भ॑वन्ती॒ प्रति॑ व॒व्रिमौ॑हत ॥

He also snorts, by whom encompassed round the **Cow laws as she clings unto the shedder of the rain**.

She with her shrilling cries **hath humbled mortal man**, and, turned to lightning, hath stripped off her Covering robe.

Rv-1.164,47: ***kṛṣṇaṃ niyānaṃ harayaḥ suparṇā apo*** *vasānā divamut patanti* |
ta āvavṛtran sadanād ***ṛta****syādid* ***ghṛtena pṛthivī vyudyate*** ||
कृ॒ष्णं नि॒यानं॑ हर॑यः सुप॒र्णा अ॒पो वसा॑ना॒ दिव॒मुत्प॑तन्ति । त आव॑वृत्र॒न्सद॑नाद॒तस्यादिद्घृ॒तेनं॑ पृथि॒वी व्यु॑द्यते ॥

Dark the descent: the birds are **golden-coloured**; up to the **heaven they fly robed in the waters**.
Again **descend** they from the **seat of Order**, and all the **earth is moistened with their fatness**.

Comment on the verses Rv-1.164,29 and Rv-1.164,47

The **verse-29** depicts condition prevailing either prior to actual rain or during raining, as the reference of **lightning** (***Vidyut***) in the verse hints at presence of **Rain-clouds** in the sky. The Poet has presented wordy picture as if a **Cow** (**rain-cloud**) is giving a loud call/hum before showering its milk (water) on a mortal person/man.

In the **verse-47**, the Composer has described ***Golden colour Rain-cloud*** as the heavenly Bird (***Suparna***) having **darker shade** (laden with water), moistening the Earth through the down-pour. However, the Composer has attributed the **phenomenon of rain** to ***Rta*** or the **Cosmic Laws** or the **laws of Nature**.

4.3. Surya as the Life Sustainer:

The occurrence of natural cycle of rain and the importance of rain water in promoting the life on the land has been explained in the following verses.

Rv-1.164,51: ***samānametadudakamuccaityava cāhabhiḥ*** |
bhūmiṃ parjanyā jinvanti divaṃ *jinvantyaghnayaḥ* ||
स॒मा॒नमे॒तदु॑दु॒कमुच्चैत्यव॒ चाहं॑भिः । भूमिं॑ प॒र्जन्या॒ जिन्व॑न्ति॒ दिवं॑ जिन्वन्त्य॒ग्नय॑ः ॥

Uniform, with the passing days, this **water mounts and fails again**.
The tempest-clouds give life to earth, and fires re-animate the heaven.

Rv-1.164,42: ***tasyāḥ samudrā adhi vi kṣaranti tena jīvanti*** *pradiśaścatasraḥ* |
tataḥ kṣaratyakṣaraṃ tad viśvamupa jīvati ||
तस्या॑ः समु॒द्रा अधि॒ वि क्ष॑रन्ति॒ तेनं॑ जीवन्ति प्र॒दिश॒श्चतं॑स्रः । ततः॑ क्षरत्य॒क्षर॒ं तद्विश्व॒मुपं॑ जीवति ॥

From her **descend in streams the seas of water**; thereby the world's four regions have their being,

Thence flows the imperishable flood and thence the universe hath life.

Comment on the verses Rv-1.164,51 and 42

Content of the **verse-51** hints at **natural rain-cycle**. Due to **heat of the Sun**, water from ocean first goes up in the sky in the **form of water vapour**, then turns into clouds that carry water from one place to another, and then water from the rain-clouds falls once again on the Earth in the form of rain-drops (***Parjanya***) which ultimately causes progress of life to the Earth.

In the verse **Rv-1.164,42**, the Poet has said subsequent to rain, how the excess rain water from all directions flows as the streams on land surface and finally gets collected in sea/ocean that are housed by the Earth. This is like the continuous flow of words/***Akshara*** from the mouth of Poet. In this way, the **rain-cycle** helps in continuing the **life-cycle** in the world.

4.4. Rain makes river Saraswati to flow that brings progress in the life of People:

Following verses depict how the life of people who lived on the banks of river **Saraswati** gets changed when the river starts flowing due to **seasonal heavy rains**.

Rv-1.164,52: ***divyaṃ suparṇaṃ*** *vāyasaṃ* ***bṛhantamapāṃ garbhaṃ*** *darśatamoṣadhīnām* |
abhīpato ***vṛṣṭibhistarpayantaṃ sarasvantamavase*** *johavīmi* ||

दि॒व्यं सु॑प॒र्णं वा॑य॒सं बृ॒हन्त॑म॒पां गर्भं॑ दर्श॒तमोष॑धीनाम् । अ॒भी॒प॒तो वृ॒ष्टिभि॑स्तर्पयन्तं॒ सर॑स्वन्त॒मव॑से जोहवीमि ॥

The **Bird Celestial, vast with noble pinion**, the lovely germ of plants**, the germ of waters**,

Him who **delighteth us with rain in season**, **Sarasvan I invoke that he may help us**.

Rv-1.164,49: *yaste* ***stanaḥ*** *śaśayo yo mayobhūryena viśvā puṣyasi vāryāṇi* |
yo ratnadhā vasuvid yaḥ sudatraḥ ***sarasvati*** *tamiha dhātave kaḥ* ||

यस्ते॒ स्तनः॑ शश॒यो यो मयो॒भूर्येन॒ विश्वा॒ पुष्यं॑सि॒ वार्या॑णि । यो र॑त्न॒धा व॑सु॒विद्यः॑ सु॒दत्रः॑ सर॑स्वति॒ तमि॒ह धात॑वे कः ॥

That **breast of thine exhaustless**, spring of pleasure, wherewith thou feedest **all things that are choicest**,

Wealth-giver, treasure finder, **free bestower**,-bring that, **Sarasvati**, that **we may drain it**.

Comment on the verses Rv-1.164,49 and 52

Poet in the **Verse-52** has denoted the **rain-cloud** as the Great ***Heavenly Bird*** (***Divyam Suparna***), the **child of Waters/** ***bṛhantamapāṃ*** and the embryo or feeder of Plants who carries water to pour the same in the form of rains/***Vrishti*** that makes everybody happy. Possibly, as the **Rain-cloud** acts as a water feeder for **Saraswati,** the Poet has termed it as **Sarasvantam**.

In the **verse-49**, the Composer conveys that river **Saraswati** is now flowing in full swing (due to heavy rains in the adjoining area), **her breasts** (***stanh***) are full now, and hence ready to feed anyone residing on her banks which would lead to creation of more wealth.

It indirectly informs us that at the time of composition of **Mandala**-1, **Saraswati** was definitely a **rain-fed river** as it used to flow **only when the region received heavy rains**.

Note:

Factuality of river **Saraswati** has been described by the Poets of the Early Mandalas as discussed below.

- **Vasistha** the Lead Poet of **Mandala-7** in the verse **Rv-7.95,2** has told us the fact about the beloved river of Vedic People. **During pre-Rigvedic time**, when king **Nahusha** was ruling his kingdom from the bank of river **Saraswati**, she regularly used to flow from **Mountain to Sea**. Probably a long before the Rigvedic Period, there was **no rain deficiency** in the Eastern part of Rigvedic Territory.
- In the verse **Rv-6.49,7**; Poet **Bharadwaja** has described river **Saraswati** as the '***Paviravi Kanya***' or the **daughter of Lightning** which indirectly manifests the river was surely a **rain-fed river**.
- However, the verses **Rv-6.61,14**; **Rv-7.96,2**; **Rv-5.43,11** and **Rv-8.21,17-18** clearly depict that now river **Saraswati** has become a **seasonal stream** that flows only when the **Sapta-Sindhu region receives very good rainfall**. Therefore, the people who resided on her banks had two options; after the rainy season either to get relocated somewhere where water was available (as **Purus** used to do after rainy season, see the verse **Rv-7.96,2** for the reference of **Grassy Banks of river Saraswati**) or dwell there and prepare to face the water scarcity.
- Geographical location of river **Saraswati** signalled in the verse **Rv-10.75,5** wherein it has been mentioned that **Saraswati** lies between the two main rivers of the **Eastern Part of Rigvedic Territory,** i. e. **Yamuna** (in the east direction) and **Sutudri** (on the west side).
- Even the description given in the verses **Rv-1.164,51** and **49** imply that **Saraswati** was definitely a ***rain-dependent river***. However, before the start of Rigvedic period, due to shortfall in the seasonal rains for a very long duration, drought like situation was created in the Eastern part of Rigvedic Territory. Then the ancestors of Rigvedic Priests came up with an idea of arrival of the **demon Vritra** in the world who was believed to have taken the water of whole world into his captivity causing scarcity of water. Then to neutralize the **effect of Vritra**, a new warrior **God Indra** was fashioned to kill many **Vritras** (a long duration drought or many droughts) and then became the Supreme God of Vedic People replacing **Varuna**.

5. Solution to the famous puzzle; "Two Birds Sitting on a Fig Tree":

In the following **three verses**, the Poet has vaguely defined the puzzle /problem, but he expects from a listener (now reader) to arrive at a proper solution.

Rv-1.164,20: ***dvā suparṇā*** *sayujā* ***sakhāyā samānaṃ*** *vṛkṣaṃ pari ṣasvajāte |*
tayoranyaḥ ***pippalaṃ*** *svādvattyanaśnannanyo abhi cākaśīti ||*

द्वा सुप॒र्णा स॒युजा॒ सखा॑या समा॒नं वृ॒क्षं परि॑ षस्वजाते । तयो॑र॒न्यः पिप्प॑लं स्वा॒द्वत्त्यन॑श्नन्न॒न्यो अ॒भि चा॑कशीति ॥

Two Birds with fair wings, **knit with bonds of friendship**, in the same sheltering tree have found a refuge.
One of the **twain eats the sweet Fig-tree's fruitage; the other eating not regardeth only**.

Rv-1.164,21: ***yatrā suparṇā amṛtasya*** *bhāghamanimeṣaṃ vidathābhisvaranti |*
ino viśvasya ***bhuvanasya gopāḥ*** *sa mā dhīraḥ pākamatrā viveśa ||*

यत्रा॑ सुप॒र्णा अ॒मृत॑स्य भा॒गमनि॑मेषं वि॒दथा॑भि॒स्वर॑न्ति । इ॒नो विश्व॑स्य॒ भुव॑नस्य गो॒पाः स मा॒ धीर॒ः पाक॒मत्रा॑ विवेश ॥

Where those fine Birds hymn ceaselessly their portion of **life eternal, and the sacred synods**,
There is the Universe's mighty Keeper, who, wise, hath entered into me the simple.

Rv-1.164,22: *yasmin vṛkṣe* ***madhvadaḥ suparṇā*** *niviśante suvate cādhi viśve |*
tasyedāhuḥ ***pippalaṃ*** *svādvaghre tan non naśad yaḥpitaraṃ na veda ||*

यस्मि॑न्वृ॒क्षे म॒ध्वदः॑ सुप॒र्णा नि॑वि॒शन्ते॒ सुव॑ते॒ चाधि॒ विश्वे॑ । तस्येदा॑हुः पिप्प॑लं स्वा॒द्वग्रे॒ तन्नो॒न्नश॒द्यः पि॒तर॑ं न वेद॑ ॥

The, **tree whereon the fine Birds eat the sweetness**, where they all rest and procreate their offspring,
Upon its top they say the fig is luscious none gaineth it who knoweth not the Father.

As mentioned in the verse **Rv-1.164,45** (discussed earlier), only **Brahmins** can decipher the contents of verses, means it is necessary to look for the exact answer for this puzzle within the hymn itself. Upon scrutinizing above **three verses** pertaining to the **Two Birds** and a **Fig Tree** revealed use of a special phrase ***bhuvanasya gopāḥ*** भुव॑नस्य गो॒पाः in the verse **Rv-1.164,21.** This reference is considered as **a contextual clue** to the **brain teasing puzzle.** This is because, in some **verses of the Early Mandalas** (refer to verses **Rv-2.27,4**; **Rv-5.62,9** and **Rv-7.51.2**), the **Three Different Family Composers** have used the term ***bhuvanasya gopāḥ***

for the **Adityas** means **the sons of Aditi**. Based on this hint, the answer to this puzzle is found to be **Savitar** and **Surya/the Sun**, the **two solar gods** (as the two birds) who are also called as the **Adityas**. Additionally, the descriptions given in the following verses taken from the **same hymn** add strength to the earlier answer to the puzzle of "**Two Birds sitting on a fig Tree**".

Rv-1.164,30: *anacchaye **turagātu jīvamejad dhruvaṃ madhya ā pastyānām** |*
__jīvo mṛtasya carati__ svadhābhiramartyo martyenā sayoniḥ ||

अनच्छये तुरगातु जीवमेजद्ध्रुवं मध्य आ पस्त्यानाम् । जीवो मृतस्य चरति स्वधाभिरमर्त्यो मर्त्येना सयोनिः ॥

That which hath breath and speed and life and motion lies firmly established in the **midst of houses**.
Living, **by offerings to the Dead he moveth Immortal One, the brother of the mortal**.

Rv-1.164,38: *apāṃ prāṃ eti svadhayā gṛbhīto.**amartyo martyenā sayoniḥ** |*
tā śaśvantā viṣūcīnā viyantā nyanyaṃ cikyurna nicikyuranyam ||

अपाङ्प्राङेति स्वधया गृभीतोऽमर्त्यो मर्त्येना सयोनिः । ता शश्वन्ता विषूचीनां वियन्ता न्य१ंन्यं चिक्युर्न नि चिक्युरन्यम् ॥

Back, forward goes he, grasped by strength inherent, the **Immortal born the brother of the mortal.**
Ceaseless they **move in opposite directions**: **men mark the one, and fail to mark the other**.

Savitar being **immortal** and **invisible Aditya** does not need food for survival (means eats no fruit) and then **Surya/the Sun** who is a **mortal** character (arrives daily in the morning and disappears in the evening) eats the fruits of fig tree (as described by the Poet). Here symbolically, the term **Peepal/fig tree** may be taken as a **mid-space** or **mid-region** where both **solar gods** move in the **opposite directions** but at different time (the **Sun** daily moves from east to west during **day time** and **Savitar** is imagined to go around the **Earth** in the **night** from west to east).

Moreover, in the verses **Rv-1.64,30** and **38**; the Poet has stated that **both have taken birth from the same womb** (as mother is same, means they happen to be the brothers, the **sons of Aditi**) and the **people see one of them** i.e. **Surya/the Sun** (is visible to all) and other one, **Savitar** remains **invisible** (like other **six ancient Adityas---Varuna, Mitra, Aryaman, Daksha, Amsha** and **Bhaga**).

Hence the answer to the well-known riddle of the hymn **Rv-1.164** "**Two Birds Sitting on a Fig Tree**" is **Savitar** and **Surya/the Sun**.

6. Poet implicit depicts the "birth of Seven Rishis (Adityas?)":

Here the two verses comprising of **Sanskrit** key words such as ***Sapta***, ***Rishi***, ***Deva***, ***Dhiti***, ***Visnu***, ***Sapta-garbha*** are taken together for discussion.

Rv-1.164,15: *sākaṃjānāṃ **sapta**thamahurekajaṃ ṣaḷ id yamā **ṛṣayo devajā** iti |*
teṣāmiṣṭāni vihitāni dhāmaśa sthātre rejante vikṛtāni rūpaśaḥ ||
सा॒कं॒जानां॑ स॒प्तथ॑माहुरेक॒जं ष॒ळिद्य॒मा ऋष॑यो देव॒जा इति॑ । तेषा॑मि॒ष्टानि॒ विहि॑तानि धाम॒शः स्था॒त्रे रे॑जन्ते॒ विकृ॑तानि रू॒प॒शः ॥

Of the co-born they call the **seventh single-born**; the **six twin pairs are called Rsis, Children of Gods**.

Their good gifts sought of men are ranged in order due, and various in their form move for the Lord who guides.

Rv-1.164,36: ***saptārdhagharbhā bhuvanasya reto viṣṇos**tiṣṭhanti pradiśāvidharmaṇi |*
*te **dhīti**bhirmanasā te vipaścitaḥ paribhuvaḥ pari bhavanti viśvataḥ ||*
स॒प्ताध॑ं॒गर्भा भुवं॑नस्य॒ रेतो॒ विष्णो॑स्तिष्ठन्ति प्र॒दिशा॒ विध॑र्मणि । ते धी॒तिभि॒र्मन॑सा॒ ते वि॑प॒श्चित॑: परि॒भुव॒: परि॑ भवन्ति वि॒श्वत॑: ॥

Seven germs unripened yet are heaven's prolific seed; their functions they maintain by **Visnu's ordinance**.

Endued with wisdom through intelligence and **thought**, they compass us about present on every side.

Comment on the verses Rv-1.164,15 and 36

Use of the word ***Sapta*** in above two verses implies that the Poet either wants to talk about **Seven ancient Rishis/Priests** (or **Seven Adityas**) who together perform Yajna ritual. In the **verse-15**, the Composer has spoken about the **birth of seven**, out of which **six are said to have born as the twins**, and **seventh** one born **single**. If we consider, all seven as the **Adityas**, then a single-born character could be **Surya/the Sun** as **seventh Aditya** who happens to be the **mortal son of Aditi**. However, here the **paired six** are treated as the **children of Gods**.

In the **verse-36**, the Composer tells us that **seven offspring** are due to Universal semen that makes half of the embryos (implicitly conveys us that the contribution of **Heaven** in making these **seven embryos** is nearly half, then remaining half contribution has to be from **Earth**). However, as per the Poet, they follow the instructions of **Vishnu**. As they have proper insight and wisdom, they encompass all directions. This description goes against the role of **Adityas** described in the Vedic Philosophy as they are senior to **Vishnu** and follow **Rta**.

7. Verse-1 depicts what Agni of Yajna is meant for a learner and Special Yajna Rituals:

Here the four verses pertaining to **Agni** and **Special Yajna ritual** have been discussed.

7.1. Smoke, Flame and the Ghee-coated firewood are the three brothers, make Yajna fire:

Rv-1.164,1: *asya vāmasya **palitasya hotustasya bhrātā madhyamo** astyaśnaḥ* |

tṛtīyo bhrātā ghṛtapṛṣṭho** asyātrāpaśyaṃ **viśpatiṃ saptaputram ||

अ॒स्य वा॒मस्य॑ पलि॒तस्य॒ होतु॒स्तस्य॒ भ्रातां॑ मध्य॒मो अ॒स्त्यश्नः॑ । तृ॒तीयो॒ भ्रातां॑ घृ॒तपृ॑ष्ठो अ॒स्यात्रा॑पश्यं वि॒श्पतिं॑ स॒प्तपु॑त्रम् ॥

Of this benignant Priest, with eld **grey-coloured**, the **brother midmost of the three is lightning**.

The third is he **whose back with oil is sprinkled**. Here I behold **the Chief** with **seven male children**.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,1

In the **verse-1** the Poet obscurely talks about **three brothers** who have different characteristic features, but they are seen together for a common cause. Probably **first brother** means **smoke** (***palit***/grey colour smoke is seen at the **top**), the **flame of fire** is the **second brother**/**middle one**, who is luminous or shines like lightning (who is very hungry means ready to consume food/sacrificial items) and the **firewood** stands for **third brother** on whose back ***ghrita*** has been applied (**wooden sticks** first smeared with **Ghrita/Ghee/ *tṛtīyo bhrātā ghṛtapṛṣṭho*** so that they can be ignited easily). The sticks are generally placed at the base or bottom in the **fire altar/Yajna-kund**, thus makes **third brother of "Agni of Yajna"**.

This description hints at, **Agni of Yajna** has been kindled using **wooden sticks** and when a **strong flame** with **smoke** appear, then the **Head Priest** and **his Seven Sons** /***viśpatiṃ saptaputram*** teach **Yajna ritual** to students. Here ***hotustasya*** **-** a pupil of Hotar Priest [**2**].

7.2. Use of the Hot Milk in the ritual:

Rv-1.164,26: *upa hvaye sudughāṃ **dhenumetāṃ** suhasto ghodhughuta dohadenām* |

*śreṣṭhaṃ savaṃ **savitā** sāviṣan no.abhīddho **gharmastadu** ṣu pra vocam* ||

उपं ह्वये सु॒दुघां॑ धे॒नुमे॒तां सु॒हस्तो॑ गो॒धुगु॒त दो॑हदेनाम् । श्रेष्ठं॑ स॒वं स॑वि॒ता सा॑विषन्नो॒ऽभीद्धो घ॒र्मस्तदु॒ षु प्र वो॑चम् ॥

I invocate the **milch-cow** good for milking so that the milker, deft of hand, may drain her.

May **Savitar** give goodliest stimulation, the **caldron is made hot**; I will proclaim it.

Commnet on the verse Rv-1.164,26

In the verse **Rv-1.164,26**; the Composer has spoken about ***Dhenu***/milch cow who gives the best quality and quantity milk, but only a skilled person can milk her properly. The Poet

appeals to **Savitar** to inspire him for the best creation (*śreṣṭhaṃ savaṃ **savitā** sāviṣan*). A pot (containing milk) is being heated for this purpose.

Use of **hot milk** in the ritual hints at **Pravargya ritual** wherein a fresh **Hot Milk** and **Ghee** are offered in the fire/Agni mainly for the personal benefit/development of a worshipper. However, in **Rigved**, there is no direct reference of **Pravargya rite**. In the post-Rigvedic literature, this ceremony has been treated as preliminary to the **Soma ritual**.

7.3. Indra, Soma and the rotational wheel of progress (fortune?):

Rv-1.164,19: *ye **arvāñcastānu parāca** āhurye **parāñcastānu arvāca** āhuḥ* |

__indraśca__ yā __cakrathuḥ soma__ tāni dhurā na yuktā rajaso vahanti ||

ये अ॒र्वाञ्चस्ताँ उ॒ परांच आहुर्ये परांञ्चस्ताँ उं अ॒र्वाचं आहुः । इन्द्रं॑श्च॒ या च॒क्रथुः॒ सोम॒ तानिं धु॒रा न यु॒क्ता रज॑सो वहन्ति ॥

Those that come hitherward they call departing, those that depart they call directed hither.

And what so ye have made, **Indra** and **Soma**, steeds bear as 'twere yoked to the region's car-pole.

Comment on the verse Rv-1;164,19

Those who are placed at the base/bottom (***arvāñc***) think about the (people) on top (***parāca***) means aspire to reach the peak and those who have reached the top, yet look at the base/downward (due to fear of downfall). **Indra** and **Soma;** how have you made this **wheel**? As if something is yoked to a pole (of a cart) that can bring rise and fall in life or instability.

Above description implies that, when a favourable **rotation of the wheel of fortune/*chakra*** occurs, then the fate of a person can change. To achieve progress and stability in life, one has to offer **Soma** (juice) specifically to please **god Indra** in **Yajna** rite.

7.4. Yajna/sacrifice makes the Gods and Sadhyas to occupy Heaven:

Rv-1.164,50: ***yajñena** yajñamayajanta **devāstani dharmāṇi** prathamānyāsan* |

*te ha **nākaṃ mahimānaḥ** sacanta yatra **pūrve sādhyāḥ** santi **devāḥ*** ||

य॒ज्ञेनं य॒ज्ञमं॑यजन्त दे॒वास्तानि॒ धर्माणि प्रथ॒मान्यां॑सन् । ते ह॒ नाकं॑ मह॒िमानः॑ सचन्त॒ यत्र॒ पूर्वे॑ सा॒ध्याः॑ सन्तिं दे॒वाः ॥

By **means of sacrifice the Gods accomplished their sacrifice**: these were the earliest ordinances.

These mighty **Ones attained** the **height of heaven**, there where the **Sadhyas, Gods of old, are dwelling**.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,50

As per the ancient laws, the Gods performed sacrifice and sacrificed themselves. Now the Gods and Sadhyas (ancient Rishis) live in Heaven. It means, to achieve a special or unique status in the world, one has to sacrifice/struggle a lot (in the form of time, money and labour).

8. Concept of "<u>The Oneness of God</u>" denoted by the Poet as "<u>That One</u>":

In the hymn **Rv-1.164;** there are two verses that highlight a new idea of the "**Oneness of God**" and these verses are as follows.

Rv-1.164,6: *acikitvāñcikituṣaścidatra **kavīn** pṛchāmi vidmane na vidvān* |
*vi yastastambha **ṣaḷimā** rajāṃsyajasya rūpe kimapi svidekam* ||
अचिकित्वाञ्चिकितुषश्चिदत्र कवीन्पृच्छामि विद्मने न विद्वान् । वि यस्तस्तम्भ षळिमा रजांस्यजस्य रूपे किमपिं स्विदेकम् ॥

I ask, unknowing, those who know, the sages, as one all ignorant for sake of knowledge,
What was **<u>that One</u>** who in the **Unborn's image hath stablished and fixed** firm these **worlds' six regions**.

Rv-1.164,46: *indraṃ mitraṃ varuṇamaghnimāhuratho divyaḥ sa suparṇo gharutmān* |
ekaṃ sad viprā bahudhā vadantyaghniṃ yamaṃ mātariśvānamāhuḥ ||
इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् । एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः ॥

They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, and he is **heavenly nobly-winged Garutman**.
To what is One, sages give many a title they call it Agni, Yama, Matarisvan.

<u>Comment on the verses Rv-1.164,6 and 46</u>

In the **verse-6** of the hymn, the Poet has asked questioned to himself and when he could not clear his own doubt, then posed the same question to the otherwise people/***Vidvan*** present there on the subject of the **physical existence of One Supreme God**. "**Who is <u>That One</u>, yet un-born but has form, which supports six worlds?**"

Then in the **verse-46** of the same hymn, the Composer has spoken up his mind about his perception of the **Real God**. In the said verse, the Singer has clearly stated that "**God is One** and the ***Rishis***/ Sages call **him** by different names such as Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni etc." However, here he did not hesitate to identify "**That One**" as "***Suparna Garutman*** which is nothing but God **Surya** who is **physically seen by one and all**, when **he** daily moves in the mid-space from east to west direction like a **high flying bird**/***suparna***.

Please note that in the verse **Rv-1.164,10**; the Poet has talked about an undefined character who stands erect and carries **three mothers** and **three fathers**/ ***tisro mātṝstrīn pitṝn*** (means **total six worlds** as mentioned in the **verse-6**) is nothing but **Surya/the Sun**.

Therefore, it can be said that on the issue of **Vedic Gods**, the Poet of the hymn **Rv-1.164** has openly taken a different stand than the several Poets of the Other Early Mandalas. As a matter of fact, he has used a **practical approach** in deciding the **Supreme God** so that nobody would raise doubt about his selection of the ***Ultimate divine being*** as "**That One**".

Note:

Mandala-8 Poet in the verse Rv-8.58,2 has first time openly talked on the "**Origin of three Rigvedic Deities from One source**". It is to be noted here that hymn **Rv-8.58** is one of the eleven **Valakhilya hymns**.

Rv-8.58,2*: **eka** evā**gnir**bahudhā samiddha **ekaḥ sūryo** viśvamanu prabhūtaḥ* |

ekaivoṣāḥ *sarvamidaṃ vi bhātyekaṃ vā idaṃvi babhūva sarvam* ||

एकं एवाग्निर्बहुधा समिद्ध एकः सूर्यो विश्वमनु प्रभूतः । एकैवोषाः सर्वमिदं वि भात्येकं वा इदं वि बभूव सर्वम् ॥

Kindled in many a spot, still **One is Agni**; **Surya is One** though high over all he shineth.
Illumining this All, still **One is Usas**. That which is **One** hath into **All developed.**

In the beginning of above verse**,** the Composer has distinctly identified the Deities like **Agni**, **Surya**, and **Usha** as "**One each**" but has called **each one**, capable to cover whole world independently. Then he took his thoughts to a new height and claimed that **all three Deities** have been originated from "**One**".

Please note that **all three Deities** described in the above verse are the **real one** as they are **physically seen** every day by the people and not like the imaginary Gods or Goddesses; Indra, Adityas, Vishnu, Aditi etc.

Although **Rigved** is mostly understood by the researchers of every walk of life as the text that is based on **polytheism**, but the special verses of the **two separate hymns**; **Rv-8.58** and **Rv-1.164** composed by the **two different Poets** of the **Two Late Mandalas** exhibit that both Composers took a **non-conventional** but **innovative route** to challenge the established view that has been the part of **Vedic Philosophy** since inception, and both Poets were successful in stirring the minds of other Composers of their times.

Strictly speaking, the Poets of the **Two Late Mandalas i. e. Mandala-8** and **1** must have raised the point of "**One God**" after the division of the **Priestly Community** due to **undue glorification of God Indra** as on the west side of river **Sindhu,** there was no scarcity of water (see the hymn **Rv-8.96** for the cryptic description given about the **split in the Vedic Society**).. And hence, it can be confidently stated that **Indra had no role in making the rivers of Western region to carry water throughout the year**. This particular point is reinforced by the fact that in **Mandala-8**, there are maximum number of references of **Dana-stuti Yajnas** performed by the Rigvedic Priests for different tribe leaders and out of them, the names of some tribe leaders are noticed first time in the Songs of Praise of **Mandala-8** only. It means to say that in comparison to the people resided in the eastern part of Rigvedic Territory, the tribes who lived in the western region were wealthy and healthy. Same thing has been reflected in the varied gifts given by the different tribe leaders to the Priests during many **Dana-stuti Yajnas**.

9. The Warriors/*Vira* eat roasted meat cooked away from the Yajna site:

Rv-1.164,43: *śakamayaṃ **dhūmamārādapaśyaṃ** viṣūvatā para enāvareṇa* |

ukṣāṇaṃ** pṛśnimapacanta **vīrāstāni dharmāṇi prathamānyāsan ||

शकमयं धूममारादपश्यं विषूवतां पर एनावरेण । उक्षाणं पृश्निमपचन्त वीरास्तानि धर्माणि प्रथमान्यासन् ॥

I saw from far away the **smoke of fuel** with spires that **rose on high over** that beneath it.

The **Mighty Men** have dressed the **spotted bullock**. **These were the customs in the day's aforetime**.

Comment on the verse Rv-1.164,43

In the above verse, the Poet claims that he has seen a strong smoke (***dhuma***) of flesh (***marad***) from a long distance that got spread in all direction. The **heroes/warriors** (***vira***) have roasted a **spotted bullock** (***ukshan***) to eat the same. This is the earliest established principle of **Yajna ritual**. In other words, after sacrificing some parts of an animal in Yajna, its left over body parts were generally cooked separately for the **Heroes** (who attended special Yajna) for their consumption. This practice is regularly being followed since early days of Yajna rite.

Note:

In the hymn **Rv-1.162** dedicated to ***Ashva* / Horse,** there are three verses which describe that after slaughtering, the horse-meat was cooked in a big pot and then some parts were offered to Gods in **Yajna** and the remaining cooked-flesh was distributed to many who were present at the time of sacrifice [**1**].

Rv-1.162,11: What from thy **body which with fire is roasted**, when thou art set upon the spit, distilleth,
Let not that lie on earth or grass neglected, but to the longing **Gods let all be offered**.

Rv-1.162,12: They who observing that the Horse is ready call out and say, the smell is good; remove it;
And, craving meat, **await the distribution**, may their approving help promote labour.

Rv-1.162,13: The trial-fork of the **flesh-cooking caldron**, **the vessels** out of which the broth is sprinkled,
The warming-pots, the covers of the dishes, hooks, carving-boards, all these attend the Charger.

However, from the contents of these three verses, it is not clear, other than the Gods, to whom the cooked horse- meat was served. Apart from the members of the Priestly community (Invokers/ Singers, Fire-kindler, Soma-presser, Sages etc.), there were other people present such as slaughterer, cooks, goat-carrier etc. However, there is no mention of the presence of the **representatives of warrior tribe** at the time of **Horse sacrifice**.

Please note that as per the available information, hymns **Rv-1.162, 163 & 164** are composed by the Poet **Dirghatamas Auchathya** who in the verse **Rv-1.164,43** clearly says that the **Heroes** ate the **flesh of a bullock**.

Concluding Remarks:

The highlights of a long and enigmatically composed Riddle hymn Rv-1.164 are as under.

- Poet says that he took the inspiration from the story of ***Rta*** to compose this Poem.
- Composer considers **Yajna** as the **navel of the world** and confidently claims that the **intriguing Speech** can only be originated from the **head of Brahmin**.
- From the contents of many verses, it is crystal clear that the Poet of the hymn **Rv-1.164** has thorough knowledge of the **Seven Metres** generally used for the composition of the Praise-Songs, the importance of the key elements of ***Richa*** such as ***Aksharas***/syllables and ***Padas***/feet in making different metres. Moreover, he is aware of the application of **Sanskrit words** like ***Vacha***, ***Vak*** and ***Vani*** etc. that convey similar meanings.
- The Composer has pointed out that the language of the **Vedic *Sukta*/Poem** is different from the language used by the common men of that era in daily life. Hence the Poet has made it clear that **only the *Brahmins***/knowledgeable people can perceive/decode the content of the Vedic verses. In other words, as per the Poet, all speakers of Vedic Sanskrit of that period were not capable to understand the **Vedic Poetry** as it demanded special skills to decipher the deeper meanings of the archaic words used in the verses.
- The Composer has employed identical words for more than one character e.g. ***Suparna*** normally means a **bird**, but the said word has been used for **Solar Deities** who move in the mid-region (***Surya*** & ***Savitar***) and **Rain-cloud**. Additionally, Sanskrit word ***Ga/ Aghnya*** generally stands for a **cow**, but in the hymn, it is applied for **Earth**, **Speech** (sacred) as well. Hence before interpreting any verse on the basis of its content, it is essential to find out the contexts of application of the various archaic Sanskrit words.
- In majority of the verses, the Poet has paid maximum attention to **Surya/the Sun** and specifically depicted the Solar God as the "**Rain Maker**" and the "**Shaper of months and Seasons**" annually observed in the world.
- The Poet has underlined the importance of rain on the living beings.
- The Poet has successfully superimposed the **Ritu-chakra**/ the wheel of seasons over the **Kaal-chakra**/the wheel of time, meaning thereby, in a yearly movement of ***Surya***, there exists twelve months of 30 days each, three main seasons and six bi-monthly seasons experienced in the Rigvedic Territory.

- In some verses, the Poet has implicitly spoken about the birth of the **Sun-god** from **Earth** (and Heaven) who are cryptically described as a **calf** and **cow** respectively.
- In the verse **Rv-1.164,10**; the Composer presented the fact that even though many Priests privately talk about the importance of **Surya**/the Sun in everybody's life, but only a few among them take interest in composing the Songs of Praise for god **Surya**.
- The most probable answer to the well-known riddle the "**Two Birds sitting on a Fig Tree**" is **Savitar** (immortal Aditya/Solar God) and **Surya** (mortal Aditya/Solar God).
- The Poet has also spotlighted the fact that **Saraswati** was the **rain-fed river**.
- By describing **Surya/the Sun** as "**That One**", the Poet has also presented the God as the most eligible candidate for the revolutionary concept of the "**Oneness of God**".
- **Smoke**, **Flame** and the **ghee-smeared firewood** are the cryptically described **three brothers** of the **verse-1**.

In short, to describe the birth of **Surya** (calf) from **Earth** (cow), the Composer has used traditional route of a **mother (Earth) mates with father (Heaven)** to produce offspring which is nothing but the law of Nature (***Rta***). And to explain the **cyclic nature of rain** and to arrive at the **yearly time-table of the different seasons** observed in the Rigvedic Territory, he has employed **observation skill** and **analytical mind** to obtain the satisfactory answers. Through some verses, the Poet, in his poetic style has deliberately interwoven a **few wordy puzzles** in the song to keep the listeners (now readers) engaged.

Additionally, through the poem **Rv-1.164,** the Poet has made us to know more about several realistic features such as the specialities of the speech of Brahmin, the structure of the Vedic Poems, the role of the Sun in running the show of the world since ancient time and his personal opinion on the novel subject, the "**Oneness of God**".

References:

1. **"Rig Veda" (Bilingual), Translated by Ralph T. H. Griffith (1896) in PDF.**
2. **Monier-Williams Sanskrit-English dictionary.**

Special Request: The reader is sincerely requested to go through the commentaries/translations made by the different authors/Vedic experts on the hymn **Rv-1.164**.